upto Amritsar w.e.f. 1-7-1994 are available between Delhi and Amritsar. Out of these 9 pairs are stopping at Beas. Special trains for Radhaswamies are also run every year between Delhi and Beas.

Introduction of a new train between Delhi and Amritsar is presently not feasible due to operational reasons and resource constraints.

Modernisaion of Railway Staions in Howrah Division

209. SHRI JOYANTA ROY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that thousands of passengers including several hundreds commuters travel daily between Howrah and Azimgunj in Howrah Division and between Sealdah and Lalgola in Sealdah Division of the Eastern Railway covering the distance of nearly 230 km and 260 km respectively and no steps excepting increase in number of few trains have been taken for the modernisation of these two sections since independence;

(b) if so, whether Government have any scheme to modernise these two sections of Eastern Railway and what is the present stage of the development process; and

(c) if not, whether Government would take appropriate measures to modernise these two sections by introduction of EMU trains by electrification, construction of double tracks?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) and (b). EMU services are already available between Howrah-Bandel and Sealdah-Krishnanagar sections. Improvement has been brought in services on Bandel-Katwa-Azimgunj and Krishna nagar-Lalgola sections through dieselisation, revision of time table and introduction of new trains Electrification of Bandel-Katwa Section is in progress and is targetted for completion by December, 1995. Further work relating to providing 3 additional crossing stations on Bandel-Katwa sections is also in progress.

(c) EMU services will be planned on Bandel-Katwa section on commissioning of electrification. Doubling of Bandel-Katwa-Azimganj and Ranaghat-Krishna nagar-Lalgola sections is not considered justified with the present level of traffic.

Derailment of Trains

210. SHRI IQBAL SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of derailments out of the total train accidents during the last two years;

(b) what is the average number of derailments per month during the first eight months of the current year;

(c) what is the average number of derailments; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to reduce derailments?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) Derailments formed 78 per cent of train accidents during the last two years.

(b) In the first 8 months of the current financial year, on an average, 34 derailments occurred per month.

(c) The derailments generally occur due to failure of equipment viz. railway track and rolling stock; lapses by engineering, mechanical, running and station staff and sabotage, etc.

(d) Safety measures are continuously undertaken to prevent derailments. Some of them are :—

(i) Planned renewal and rehabilitation of overaged assets like track, rolling stock and bridges.

(ii) Thorough periodical examination of coaches, wagons and locomotives in sheds and shops to keep them in good fettle.

(iii) Ultrasonic testing of rails and axles to identify fractures.

(iv) Design improvement of certain type of rolling stock.

(v) Upgradation of maintenance skill of staff to suit advanced technologies.

(vi) Identification of vulnerable and derailment-prone sections and induction of necessary inputs therein

(vii) Training, counselling and monitoring of running staff.

(viii) Constitution of High-level safety teams to conduct intensive inspections of field installations and operating practices to enhance safety consciousness at the grass-root level.

Resignation by the Chairman, Konkan Railways

211 SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Chairman, Konkan Railways has submitted his resignation and if so, the details thereof;

(b) what action has been taken by Government thereon;

(c) whether it is also a fact that several top Engineers working in the tunnel and bridges on the Konkan Railways have sought permission to return to their respective Railways Zones; and

(d) if so, the details of the reasons submitted by them and action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Contract for optical fibre communication system for Konkan Railways

212 SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the contract for the optical fibre communication system for Konkan Railways has been finalised and if so, the names of the party to whom the said contract was given;

(b) the details of the quotation received from the contractor or the optical fibre communication system; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the Chief of Konkan Railways had refused to award contract for the optical fibre communication system in favour of the person recommended by him and if so, the names of the said firm and the rates quoted by that firm?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF). (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

अहमदाबाद-हावड़ा ट्रेन का देरी से चलना

213. **श्री आनन्दीबेन जेठाभाई पटेल** : क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि अहमदाबाद-हावड़ा एक्सप्रेस डाउन और हावड़ा-अहमदाबाद एक्सप्रेस डाउन अपने निर्धारित समय से नहीं चल रही हैं; यदि हां, तो इसके कारण क्या हैं ;